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### CHE Passes the Student Bill of Rights

The CHE recently approved a [Student Bill of Rights](#). The principles in the document were developed as a result of feedback provided to the CHE by lawmakers, parents, families and students throughout the state during this year’s statewide town hall tour. It recognizes the Commission’s responsibility to assure a balance between student and taxpayer interests, institutional needs and economic development and lays out specific items to start a discussion about how to reach that balance.

The Bill of Rights specifically states:

- 1) SC students have the right to accessible education
- 2) SC students have the right to an affordable education
- 3) SC students have the right to expect excellence and a return on investment in their educational experience

The following proposals are included to further these goals:

- Palmetto Fellow and Life lottery tuition scholarship recipients should be granted automatic acceptance to any public institution of higher learning in South Carolina.
- Qualified in-state students should be first in line in the admission process, and out of-state growth should not necessitate institutional expansion and capital spending. Out-of-state enrollments should be assessed, managed and potentially capped.
- Tuition breaks for out-of-state students should be reviewed and potentially capped.
- Students should be able to freely transfer qualified courses between institutions.
- Cost of attendance should be capped, frozen, or decreased.
- Institutions should adopt policies of transparency and consistency in disclosing fees.
- The Commission on Higher Education should collect, assess and monitor institution budgets (as proscribed by law) and enrollments.
- South Carolina’s students have the right to expect that their success and well being will be at the heart of every decision made at every level within the state’s higher education system.

To clarify the intent of the document, CHE Chairman, Tim Hofferth, sent a letter announcing the Student Bill of Rights, and explaining its purpose, to each research and four-year comprehensive institution president and all members of their board of trustees stating:

- 1) The Student Bill of Rights is a starting point for discussion
- 2) The items are not mandates
- 3) The Commission recognizes that a one-size-fits-all approach is not feasible
- 4) The metrics and implementation timeline associated with each item may vary at each institution
- 5) Nothing in the document usurps the authority of the legislature or the board of trustees at each institution

The CHE looks forward to continuing this important discussion with lawmakers, the business community, institutions of higher learning, and interested citizens about how to maximize access, affordability and excellence in South Carolina’s system of higher education.

### CHE’s Statewide Town Hall Tour Update

Over the last few months, the CHE has held numerous town hall meetings throughout the state, in Greenville, Columbia, Charleston, Rock Hill, Spartanburg, Beaufort, and Florence, drawing crowds at each event. Lively discussion at the town hall events has centered on growing concerns about rising tuition costs, barriers to access and the financial stability of the state’s higher education system. To view coverage of the meetings, click on the links below or check out the agency [Twitter](#) page:

[Packed House for S.C. Commission on Higher Education Greenville Town Hall](#)

[Greenville News: “SC higher ed chairman urges universities to “rightsize,” cites high tuition statistics”](#)

[Greenville Business Magazine: “Higher Ed Commission Predicts ‘Financial Knife Fight’”](#)

[The State: “How expensive is it to go to a public college in SC? Hold on to your wallet”](#)

**The next town hall meeting will be in Aiken next Thursday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 p.m. at Aiken High School located at 449 Rutland Drive.** The focus will again be on college access and affordability in South Carolina. In addition, scholarship personnel will be available 20 minutes before and after the event to answer questions students and families may have about state scholarships. All members of the public are welcome to attend. To view a flyer with event details, visit the front page of our website ([www.che.sc.gov](#)) and click on [“Aiken Town Hall Meeting”](#).

The future town hall meeting schedule is below:

- [Anderson](#), Thursday, June 7, 2018, 5:30 p.m.  
Anderson County Library, 300 N. McDuffie St, Anderson, SC
- [Orangeburg](#), Thursday, June 21, 2018, 5:30 p.m.  
Location TBD

For all events, please RSVP to Andrew Roof, administrative coordinator, at [arroof@che.sc.gov](#) or (803) 730-5638 if you plan to attend.

### New Data Released: Minority Enrollment Report

For the first time, the CHE has compiled and published [data](#) on minority enrollments for the years 2000 through 2017 at each public research, four-year comprehensive, two-year regional, and technical college in South Carolina. The report uses opening headcount undergraduate enrollment self-reported to the CHE by the institutions through the CHE Management Information System (CHEMIS).

To view the report, visit our webpage and click on [“Minority Enrollment Trends in South Carolina 2000-2017.”](#) Also, to read a recent news article in *The State* newspaper which references the report, click [here](#).

### Student Affairs Updates: College Decision Month and Palmetto Fellows Late Award Period

**College Decision Month:** In recognition of the importance of post-secondary education for students throughout the state, Governor McMaster recently issued a proclamation naming May 2018 “College Decision Month.” The CHE is grateful for the Governor’s recognition of this important issue and will continue to work with high school counselors throughout the state to promote the opportunities for higher education and all available scholarships.

**Palmetto Fellows Late Award Period:** CHE staff is currently processing applications for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship late award period. Application materials have been distributed to each South Carolina high school and Home School Association. Seniors who graduate by the end of the academic year ending in May/June 2018 and who meet the eligibility requirements should contact their high school counselor or Home School Association director immediately about the application information. The Late Award period application deadline is June 15, 2018. This will be the last opportunity for current high school seniors to qualify for the Palmetto Fellows scholarship.

For more information about South Carolina state scholarships or application requirements, visit: [www.sccango.org](#) or [http://www.che.sc.gov/Students,FamiliesMilitary/PayingForCollege/FinancialAssistanceAvailable/ScholarshipsGrantsforSCResidents.aspx](#)

### Articles of Interest

- The New York Times:* [With Changing Students and Times, Colleges Are Going Back to School](#)
- The New York Times:* [Even With Scholarships, Students Often Need Extra Financial Help](#)
- The New York Times:* [Middle-Class Families Increasingly Look to Community Colleges](#)